



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, NEIGHBORHOODS, AND STRATEGIC PLANNING DEPARTMENT

### M E M O R A N D U M

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DATE: May 1, 2007

TO: Ray Giometti, Planning Commission Chair  
Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Rebecca Lind, Long Range Planning Manager

SUBJECT: **Briefing on Benson Hill Communities Single-Family  
Designation; Application 2007-M-06**

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#### Issue Statement

- Is the City of Renton's current vision for predominately single-family land use in the Benson Hill Communities still appropriate in the Cascade neighborhood area in light of the County's R-6 zoning for this area?
- Should Renton's existing RS land use designation, which would allow R-8 zoning, be retained for this area or should a different land use designation, such as RLD, which would allow R-4 zoning, be considered as an appropriate replacement for the County's current R-6 zoning in this area?

#### Background

The **Benson Hill, Cascade, and Springbrook** neighborhoods area includes 4.2 square-miles and is home to 16,100 residents. An annexation election for this area is set for November 6, 2007. Since annexation cannot be implemented without concurrent zoning the City is currently reviewing the existing zoning in the 2,438-acre Benson Hill Communities annexation area to determine what future zoning should be.

A portion of this area that was developed in the 1960's is currently designated Residential Single Family on Renton's Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map and does not appear to warrant a change. This area is the 477-acre Cascade neighborhood in the northeast section of the proposed Benson Hill Communities Annexation area. This area is generally bound by 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE on the west, the existing City of Renton boundary on the north, 131<sup>st</sup> Avenue SE on the east, and SE 172 Street on the south.

King County currently designates the Cascade neighborhood Urban Residential, medium, 4-12 du/acre. All of the area is currently zoned by the County R-6, six units per gross acre. The R-6 zone allows bonusing up to nine units per gross acre, which is the equivalent of slightly over 11 units per net acre under Renton's method of calculating density. Although the latter density is higher than Renton's R-10 zone, it is generally

assumed, that because this area is virtually 100 percent built out, few opportunities for higher density exist in the area. Lots in this area are typically 7,500 to 9,300 square feet in area, although occasionally there are lots found as large as 13,500 square feet in area in.

Because, under Renton's R-8 zone, the minimum lot area is 5,000 square feet for lots less than one acre in size, it is unlikely, except for those few over 10,000 square feet in area, that additional lots could be created in the neighborhood under the RS land use designation and this zoning. The existing average density in the subject study area appears to be around 4.15 du/gross acre or about 5.2 du/net acre. This is 35 percent less dense than what would be allowed under Renton's R-8 zone. This lower density probably reflects the fact that bonusing did not exist when this area developed in the 1960's.

Whereas Renton's R-4 zone might also be considered for this area based upon its relatively low density, the number of lots (probably the vast majority) in the 7,300 square foot to 7,600 square foot range would result in a majority of these becoming legal non-conforming since the minimum lot size in this zone is 8,000 square feet. As a consequence, staff is recommending that the Cascade neighborhood continue to retain the current RS land use designation shown for it on Renton's Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. It is generally understood that if the area annexes into the City of Renton, it would have R-8 zoning with a maximum density of eight units per net acre. Although a few lots are large enough to subdivide, the vast majority are not.

### **Recommendation:**

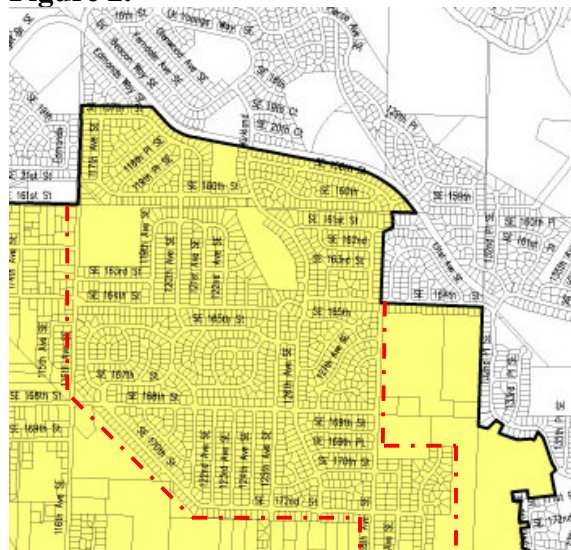
That the existing Residential Single Family land use designation shown on Renton's Comprehensive Plan for the Cascade neighborhood not be changed since it is the more consistent of the two alternative designations considered.

**Figure 1.**



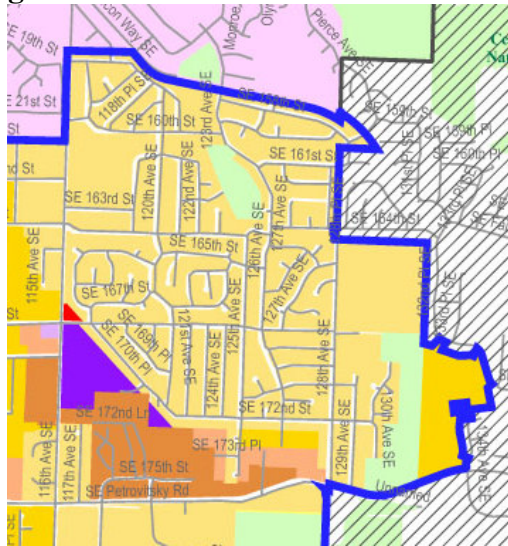
Aerial of Cascade Neighborhood Subarea

**Figure 2.**



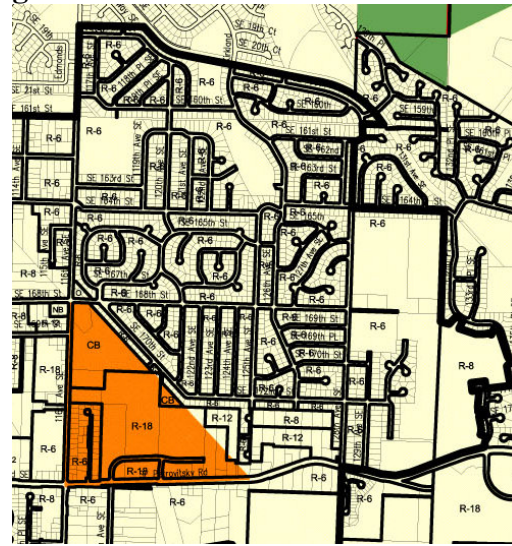
Cascade Neighborhood Subarea

**Figure 3.**



# King County Land Use Map

**Figure 4.**



## Renton Comp Plan w/ County Zoning